

Senate Finance and Public Administration Legislation Committee

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Additional Estimates 24-28 February 2014

Prime Minister and Cabinet Portfolio

Department/Agency: Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet

Outcome/Program: 1.1 Prime Minister and Cabinet

Topic: Statement of Standards for Ministerial Staff

Senator: Senator the Hon Penny Wong

Question reference number: 19

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Question:

Senator WONG: We have had some evidence today, and more generally, about arrangements been put in place supposedly to deal with conflicts of interest. Was PM&C asked to provide actually advice at any point in relation to any such arrangements applying to Mr Furnival?

Ms Kelly: No.

Senator WONG: Senator Abetz, when were those arrangements first developed?

Senator Abetz: I would have to take that on notice.

Senator WONG: This has been a topic of significant focus in the Senate and the House of Representatives and on the public record, Senator. Are you telling me you can't tell us when the so-called conflict of interest arrangements, which the Prime Minister himself has referred to, were put in place?

Answer:

The Government Staff Committee operates consistent with long-standing Coalition practice. As well, there is a Statement of Standards for Ministerial Staff, developed by the former Labor government, and strengthened by this Government, that all Ministers' staff must follow.